

he goes elsewhere. On the Sabbath he entered a synagogue at Capernaum and taught. Jesus was not to be silenced because his message was not received at Nazareth. Capernaum must hear it also. Behold, a man who believes in his message! He changes not the message because it was unwelcome. A divine compulsion is upon him to speak it. Let a preacher have faith in his message, he cannot be silenced by unappreciation, by coldness, nor even by violence. God, give us more preachers who have a message, which they believe in with their whole lives!

In this synagogue besides the other people who met there, was a man possessed of a demon. Strange yet true, that demons are as regular and sometimes more so in their attendance on divine service than godly people. Satan rarely misses a sermon. But this time the demon got in the wrong church for comfort. Not often do they cry out. But when they do, you can guess that the preacher must have something in common with this preacher of Capernaum. As Jesus spoke his message this man cried out, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God." Jesus did not order him taken out, try to calm him, or take back what he had said in order to quiet the man, or explain away the force of his message, but with faith commanded the devil to come out of the man. And the devil after tossing the man about obeyed. And the people were amazed.

Today the demons whose cry is, "Let us alone" are many.

Let the preacher cry against the saloon, and innumerable cries are heard, sometimes even from church members, "Let us alone." "It is none of your business. Tend to your praying and preaching about the sins of the Jews." And when the devils begin to yell, always some sympathizing church members are found who expostulate with the preacher for hurting people's feelings and driving them away from church.

Let the preacher upbraid the tobacco devil, that unclean, filthy species, and again a greater cry, "Let us alone" is heard. For the devil has the people in such control that unless they bow at his shrine and use his filthy weed, they will have the toothache, headache, stomach trouble, nervous debility or some very severe trouble. And of course, they must be let alone.

Let the preacher denounce the filthy story-demon, and every old and young sweet-mouth in the town will cry out in awful agony, "Let us alone." "Only a story" they say. But so well do they love the dirt and muck of it that they protest against disturbance.

Let the preacher cry aloud against the

kissing-party demon which especially is partial to young people, and again every moon-struck youth yells in terrible agony, "Let us alone. Can't the young people ever enjoy themselves?" Alas! that some people can't enjoy themselves unless they go around like calves sucking each other's ears!

And there are many others, the demon of Pleasure, whose name indeed is Legion, the demon of Mammon whose ferocity would shame a Moloch, the demon of Selfishness, who is the head of the whole pandemonium, the Zeus of the devils. All these have the same prayer, "Let us alone."

A devil wants nothing better than letting alone. How similar to them some people are!

The very thing Jesus came to do was not to let them alone. We Christians certainly ought to follow in his footsteps. To let them alone means their growth and progress; to rebuke them means their overthrow. Why then do we fear as preachers to disturb the demons? When a man cries out, "Let us alone" you can almost always decide the case at once. "Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and teaching." II Tim. 4:2.

Home Circle

A Signal of Hope

(Editorial.)

The whole reading world is acquainted with the history of Captain Dreyfus, who for five years has been the innocent victim of the worst conspiracy of modern times. He is a Jew, and before his conviction on a false charge of treason, was one of the ablest officers in the French army. Two other officers were the real traitors, who sold the important secrets of the French war office to hostile foreign governments. They were in danger of detection, and to shield themselves wove a net of false charges and forgeries around this unsuspecting Jew, resulting in his conviction before a court martial, and a sentence of life imprisonment and solitary confinement on Devil's Island, a bleak and horrible spot in the burning tropics off the coast of Africa. There he has been held for five years, but is now back in France undergoing a re-trial, his friends having succeeded in forcing the government to take account of the great mass of evidence which has been discovered showing that he was innocent, and the victim of a cruel conspiracy.

When this evidence was first published, several years ago, the great French generals who were guilty of this outrage upon justice, fearing the universal odium which would attach to their names when the full story of their lies and forgeries should become known, concluded that the shortest road of their danger was to procure the death of their victim, languishing in his prison. They knew by the reports of their jailor that the poor Jew

had fallen into a state of deep despondency, a physical and mental lethargy, which if it was assisted by systematic cruelty would in all probability hasten his death. So they sent orders that the prisoner should be kept in irons. Accordingly for two months the manacles were riveted on his hands and feet. There was no earthly reason for this harshness. He had not offended his jailors in word or deed. There was no possible chance for his escape from a little island which was patrolled by soldiers on the land and by gunboats on the water. Their plain object was to end his life in such a way as to avoid the appearance of actual murder, which of course they dared not commit.

Now comes the remarkable part of the story. "It suddenly occurred to him that the purpose of his jailors was to hasten his death. Before that time he had wished for death, but when he recognized in the unprovoked cruelty of the prison officials a deliberate attempt to put an end to his life, there sprang up in his mind a sudden hope. He felt that something must have occurred in France. His wife, his friends, must have accomplished something. Perhaps his enemies saw that proof of his innocence was forthcoming. At any rate there was a reason for this new persecution. He drew together all the forces of his mind and soul. He determined that he would not die. He would live in spite of the iron manacles, the racking fever, the torturing silence,—live to see his wife and children, live to restore the honor of his name. It was the supreme psychological hour of his long ordeal. The love of life and liberty and the hope of a perfect vindication filled his nights and days. He beat down death with his resolute will. The more he thought of it the more firmly he was convinced that the irons were a signal of hope."

There is a lesson in this narrative which comes so nearly home to the experience of every suffering child of God, a lesson of such significance and importance that it should be well pondered and held in long remembrance. We are often astounded at the events which come into our lives. These sufferings and these calamities appear to be inexplicable. We cannot understand them. Affliction, defeat, disappointment, sickness, bereavement, alienations, disasters of every kind, throng upon us with a persistency and cruelty which seems born of infinite malice. We think of Job in the hands of Satan, and we conclude that this was by no means an isolated experience. He was merely a type of millions, harried by unaccountable persecutions, the object of which seems to be to overwhelm the soul with discouragement and despair. We ask, almost in accents of rebellion: why this sickness? Why this long invalidism? Why this sore bereavement? Why this sudden poverty? Why this relentless persecution of spirit? The words of the imprisoned and persecuted Jew give us a thrilling answer to all these questions of anguish, questions which are on so many lips. These cruelties, these martyrdoms, these